

UNDER A DARKENING SKY

the Signoria, expressing their amazement that the Pisans had rejected their overtures. His instructions were to exhort Messer Piero and the Anziani to enter the league, and, if they refused, to warn them in strong language of the indignation this would arouse in Florence. He was then to do the same at Lucca, where, if the citizens answered that they would enter the league only when the other communes of Tuscany had done so, he was to tell them openly that he had had a favourable reply from Pisa (if it were so), and to add that the Sienese were most ready to follow the same course. And indeed, on November 27, Siena formally joined the league, stipulating that it should not last less than four years, that she should not be bound to keep more than one hundred and fifty lances in its service, and that none of the confederates should aid the Aretines against her.¹ Nevertheless, Pisa and Lucca both stood firm, albeit the latter State gave way so far as to allow a free passage through its territory to a body of men-at-arms that Bernabo Visconti was sending to Florence.

The Florentines had at length realized that, even with the doubtful adherence of the other Tuscan communes, the assistance of Bernabo Visconti alone would not suffice to enable them to fight against the Pope—especially as Hawkwood, in spite of the enormous bribe that he was still receiving from the Republic, had gone back, in September, to the service of the Church. In addition, at the beginning of October, the Pope (as, indeed, he had done several times before) announced his intention of returning very shortly to Rome. This the Florentines resolved to prevent. With the consent of the Signoria, the Otto della Guerra undertook to stir up a general rebellion of all the cities and towns of the Papal States. Envoys and letters were despatched, offering all the forces of the Republic to aid them, and promising to preserve their liberty. Let them remember that they are Italians, whose portion it is to command and not to obey. Let them contrast the sweetness of liberty with the tyrannical rule of the barbarians whom the pastors of the Church have sent from Gaul to oppress them. Let them shake *off* the shameful

¹ Gherardi, *op. cit.*, p. 20, docs. 83
and 84. I₄₉